



# Guide to State Museum

*Iqbal Ahmad*

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Pratap Chandra

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## S P S MUSEUM

State Pratap Singh Museum the house of Kashmir antiquities and old art was established by Maharaja Pratap Singh in 1898 AD at Rambir Singh Palace, in Srinagar, Kashmir.

The Museum is situated on the left bank of River Jehlum at Lal Mandi, one and half kilometer from Tourist Reception Centre. General Raja Amar Singh, and a British Captain Godfray are said the brains behind the establishment of the Museum. They inspired Maharaja Pratap Singh, for setting up the Museum. Daya Ram Sahani and R C Kak like veteran Archaeologists efforts helped Museum to enrich its antiquities collection. The maximum antiquities of Kashmir and its frontier districts are housed in the Museum.

Initially Museum had meagre antiquities collection but when in 1913 Archaeology Department was reorganized under the supervision of Daya Ram Sahani the first trained archaeologist it begin to develop. Scientific excavations were carried in the state which brought to light number of archaeological sites of the valley. The finds of historic sites of Pandrethan, Parahaspura, Avantipura, Uhskar, Devesar, Verinag, Bijbehara, Harwan and

other places found their place in the Museum. Besides those that have come from excavations, there are number of such finds too which were acquired by the Museum by purchasings. A few were recovered by police and handed over to the Museum. R C Kak who is said to had prepared register of finds also published a handbook of archaeology and numismatic sections of the Museum in 1923 the same handbook was reprinted in 1977 by Dr. Sheikh Muhammad Iqbal (Ex Director Research and Museums) J&K State.

Since then there has been no effort to prepare any guide book of the museum.

The present booklet on the museum collections titled 'Guide to state Museum' is the first attempt after a period of about eighty years. It is a fresh work which provides you a first hand information



of various collections of all most all the galleries of the museum.

In preparation of this booklet I am highly indebted to my colleagues who provided me full cooperation in taking up the task. I am grateful to Zahoor Ahmad Khan (Photographer) and Sajjad Ahmad Shah (Computer Operator) who assisted me in bringing out this booklet.

Lastly my thanks for all of my colleagues.

Dated: 10th January 2002

Iqbal Ahmad

### **(Acknowledgment)**

Special thanks for gallery incharges and other museum staff for cooperation and encouragement.



## CHRONOLOGY

Kashmir millions of years ago is said was a vast lake called Satisar. A common legend accounted in various chronicles states that there dwelt a married hermit called Kash. He is said prayed to God for a dry land with in the lake. The legend maintains that he was heard and the land dried up. This dry land so farmed took the name Kashyapa which later came to be pronounced Kashmir. The first people are believed were either Nagas or Aryans who arrived here to live on upper lands called Kerawas. The Archaeological excavations carried on few Kerawa tops during 2nd half of the 20th century AD revealed few caves and materials of ancient settlements. These people are believed lived thousands of years ago in these caves. During Buddhist ages Gandhara and Kashmir, the north western province formed one of the principality among those sixteen Janapadhas reflected in vedic hymns. Later on Magdhan Ashoka is said to had annexed Kashmir with rising power of Magdha. This fact is also testified by numismatic evidences. Several Magdhan type Panch Marka coins are found from this land. From Ashoka to the times of Kushans 1st AD, the Kashmir chronology is very much confused, but on the other hand numismatic evidences of several Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythian princes speak of their some political authority over Kashmir. For Kushan princes the literary evidences are well collaborated by archaeological and numismatic evidences. Kushans are believed ruled the land upto 4th Century AD and were then succeeded by Kidara princes. White Huns are said to had entered the valley in 5th Century AD. and held the land upto 6th century AD which then provided opportunity to its local people called Karkota's to rule

their country. Karkota Rajas (600-855) were in turn followed by Utpalas (855-939) and Lahouras (940-1320) respectively.

Muslim missionaries who had already found their way into Kashmir in last phases of Lahoura Rajas influenced the political screen of the land. Their arrival finally resulted not only in changing



the political scenario of the land but its social and cultural fabric as well. In 1334 AD Kingdom permanently passed to the Sultans of Shahmeri and Chak dynasties. They held it upto 1586 AD but lastly crumbled before the growing powers of Mughal emperor Akbar who invaded it in 1586 AD. Mughals ruled the land by help of its governors.

The tradition was followed by Afghan Durrannies who came to rule it in 1753 AD and continued upto 1819 AD. Durrannies where succeeded by Sikhs of Punjab in 1819 AD who held it upto 1846 AD and finally Kingdom passed to Dogra Rajas of Jammu who continued on the throne till 1947.



## ARCHAEOLOGY

The gallery was established in 1889 initially it was very poor. It exhibited only few bronze images of state Toshkhana, later on few images and seals collected from Ladakh were presented to the museum by Sir John Marshall (Archaeologist). With the reorganization of Archaeology department in 1913, the gallery enriched its collections. Systematic explorations and excavations were carried in whole of the valley which revealed numerous archaeological sites and cultural materials.

## TERRA-COTTA TILES

Manufacturing of stamped bricks or terra-cotta tiles in the valley has experienced stages of evolution before it reached to a more advanced stage at Harwan. The earliest evidences of stamped bricks are recorded from Liddru-Hionar (Pahalgam) discovered in 1979. These tiles are dated to 2nd Century AD and bear crude human and animal figures. Such tiles are recorded to had been recovered also from Donipathar, Yaren, Yendar and Gudar Nakh (South Kashmir). In the same forest range of Lidderu-Pahalgam in year 1987 one another tile pavement was recovered in the upper reaches of village Hutmura (South Kashmir). The pavement is laid out in concentric circles with a full blown lotus in the centre. The tiles are of various shapes and patterns. The motifs on these represent human beings with normal facial appearances, human beings with animals heads, human beings carrying tails, animals and birds represented by lions, deer, swans cocks and other items of fauna and flora. One of the tile carries branches of grapes Almost all the tiles are numbered in Kharoshti numerals. These tiles are also dated to 2nd century AD and are executed more well than Hionar tiles.

The terra-cotta tiles were also found at Kralachak (Anantnag) Ahan (Baramulla) Takiyabal (Pulwama) and Kanishpura (Baramulla) but most of these finds went outside Kashmir.



The more advanced, valuable and striking finds of terra-cotta tiles housed in the gallery are from Harwan. These tiles are stamped in variety of motifs presenting an effective and colourful picture of human beings mythical and real representation of animals, flora and other abstract designs which distinguishes them as unique in Indian art.

Harwan lies at a distance of 19 kms in north-east of Srinagar. It was earlier called Shadarhadavana which means forest of six saints. Nagarjun a Buddhist monk is said lived here during the time of Kanishka (C.125 AD). Harwan is suggested the corrupt form of its ancient name. R C Kak, (Archaeologist) undertook the excavation of the site in 1921 AD. The site then revealed important evidences of constructional techniques, artistic remains and other cultural materials which the Kak attributed to Buddhists and dated it to 3rd century AD when Kashmir was under political influence of Kushans. The another Buddhist settlement was found at Ushkar in Baramulla district about 55 kms from Srinagar. The site was identified with the ancient town of Huvihakpura believed to had been founded by one Huviska (a Kushan prince) in circa 2nd century AD.

The site revealed few beautiful terra-cotta heads which were dated to 4th century AD. The heads are placed here in a cabin. These are the best evidences of nice modeling from Kashmir. Such heads were also recovered from Ambarin (Akhnoor) and at Parahispura (Srinagar). These are the heads of Buddha in various forms and of Bodhisattavas.

## **STONE SCULPTURES**

The earliest sculptures housed in the gallery are from the historical town of Bijbehara located in South Kashmir. The town is about 40 kms from Srinagar. In olden times it was known by the name of Vijayawara and founded by some Vijaya named king. The present name is a corrupt shape of its ancient name. The images



of few Hindu goddesses were way back recovered from the town and are housed in this gallery. These are considered the earliest magnificent evidences of Kashmir stone sculptures.

The Sculptures are dated earlier to 6th century AD. The two images put on display are identified as headless Durga and Kartikeya. The images are dressed in hellenistic style and compares with Gandhara images. The material clings to the body with a series of dense pleats between the legs indicated by string folds, it is a common feature which John Siudmak (expert) has found on early sculptures of both Kashmir and Gandhara. The next group of sculptures are from Pandhrethan. It is an old locality on the outskirts of Srinagar. This is believed the olden capital of the land founded by Maharaja Ashoka in 3rd Century BC.

It was then named Purandistana the present name is also suggested the developed form of this ancient name. Most of the stone sculptures housed in the gallery are from Pandharethan. Daya Ram Sahani (Archaeologist) in 1913 AD made extensive surveys and excavations at Pandhrethan, he exhumed numerous stone images of several Hindu and Buddhist dieties. These sculptures were brought to the museum and are housed in the gallery. These sculptures are dated to 7th and 8th Century AD. The characterized feature of these sculptures lies in their heavy, fleshy treatment of the body and faces and bold ornamentations. These are the tallest sculptures of the gallery.

The another group of sculptures which in many ways are close to Pandhrthan sculptures are from famous site of Parishpura.

The site locally is known by the name of Kanishar (city of Stones) it was founded by one Raja Lalitaditya in the first half of the 8th Century AD. It is situated about 13 kms from Srinagar. There existed ruins of few earlier foundations. The ruins as per records were first put to systematic excavation in year 1914 by Daya Ram Sahani (Archaeologist). A group of Buddhist sculptures were exhumed form the site which are displayed in the gallery. The



size and body treatment more or less makes these sculptures close to Pandrethan Hindu images while their creasented type head crowns of few images are more similar to other schools, that of Avantipura and Verinag sculptures.

The general effeminacy of these figures as compared with those of Pandhrethan is specially note-worthy writes R C Kak (Archaeologist).

Awantipura sculptures housed in the gallery are the glorious images of Vishnu. The place is situated 25 kms from Srinagar towards southern Kashmir.

Awantivarman a local Raja is said to had laid foundation of the town on the right bank of river Jehlum in 855 AD. The ruins of the two massive stone temples are still seen in this town.

Robert E Fisher (Expert) provides the following description of Avantipura sculptures. 'Foremost among these images is the four headed four armed Vishnu that first began appearing in the late eight century towards the end of Karkota period known as the Vaikuntha or Chaturanana image of Vishnu. This particular form of deity has become synonymon's with Kashmir art, it is now best known image from the valley and is often rendered in brass as well. The regally attired figure of Vishnu stands between his two Personified attributes Gananari and Chakrapurusha with the earth goddess, Prithvi emerging between his feet, typically the God wears a long garland reaching below the knees and a dagger at his waist (unique to Kashmiri versions) and hold his usual attributes in each of the four hands. In the front is a placid human face, with a boar and lion on either sides and a ferocious visage believed perhaps added by the Pancharatrins to suit their theory of Chaturvyuha, a system already noted in configuration of Vishnu temples in Kashmir such as the Avantiswami.

Another group of Vishnu images carrying maximum attributes are dated to later periods of Hindu rule 12th and 13th Century AD. Most of these images have got thin body treatment and exhibit



a diminishing art. The images are in flattened relief while the attributes are seen gradually losing their charm. These images are recorded to have been recovered from the famous tourist site of Verinag in south Kashmir during the construction of a forest. Verinag is situated at a distance of 74 kms from Srinagar in South Kashmir.

The gallery houses a rich collection of bronze images but most of those images have been kept temporarily in reserved lockers. There is only one master bronze frame on display in the gallery that is called Shankarvarman's bronze frame. It is a rare find of its kind and is recorded to have been recovered in 1925 from the ancient site of Devesarasa at Devesas Kulgam in South Kashmir.

Wonderfully executive the frame is oval shaped. It measures 6' 2" long 4' - 4" broad about 1/2' thick and 3 maunds and four seers in weight. It on its borders depicts various incarnations of Vishnu, besides the images of sun and moon god. The frame is dated to 10th Century AD and believed to have been casted in the period Shankarvarman.

## NUMISMATICS

Numismatics is the largest gallery of the museum which houses a record collection of ancient coins. These include 24000 copper 20,000 silver and 58 gold coins (this counting is as per the records of 1956). Since then the museum collected thousands of more coins. All most all the coins are unclassified, Maximum collection are undeciphered. G B Bleazby the then Accountant general to Maharaja in 1900 is said to have set-up the numismatic cabin in the Museum. He also prepared a list of 1500 coins but unfortunately his display has been disturbed and it does not match with the present day display.

Numismatic has a long history in Kashmir.

The exchange mechanism of Jammu and Kashmir like other parts of the India was based on 'barta' system. Things like cattle



wealth, rice etc. formed medium of exchange. Besides, these things cowree shells were also used as the lowest monetary tokens. Kalhana speaks of a king Sangramadeva who stated collecting wealth with a cowree amassed crores. On the other hand from the critical study of Rajatarangni it appears that ancient kings, the Damaras, rich merchants were engaged in assessing bullion in the form of ignots and heavy ornaments.

The bullion money was later followed by such metal pieces which on their one side carried some symbols. Such metal pieces came to be known as coins.

The ancient coins known to numismatists as panch marka coins have been recovered in thousands from Kabul to the frontier of Bengal. These coins are rectangular and circular shaped and on the obverse bear one to five symbols impressed on the metal piece by means of separate punches. These coins broadly are classified in two major series. One is called as local series and is dated to Janapdaha period circa 600-350 BC and the other imperial series which is dated to period 350-150 BC. The local series coins are believed to had been issued by minor states and bear less symbols. The imperial series coins were issued by major states and such coins bear five symbols. These coins are also known by the name of Maghadain type. These are believed to had been evolved from the major state of Maghada which in 3rd century BC. emerged as a major Indian power and occupied other minor states. The Jammu and Kashmir state from its few places frequently revealed few such coins.

There are seven panch marka coins recorded in the Museum. Two such coins were collected by G B Bleazby in 1900 AD while five coins of this series were purchased by the Museum. There are most rare coins housed in the gallery but interesting are those few coins which were struck by one Afghan governor Atta Muhammad Khan in 1808-1810 AD in the names of two celebrated saints of Kashmir. These coins bear the names of Noor-ud-Din



(RA) and Makhdoom Jehan (RA). These two saints are widely respected and honoured in the valley.

The all other coins represented in cabins are as follows.

S.No.	DYNASTY	KING	PERIOD
01.	Greeks	Dometrus of Syria Phillp II of Macedon Alexander III Alexander the great	?   336 BC
02.	Bactrian Greek	Diodotus Euthy demons Eurkratidus Agathocles Antimaches	?    
03.	Indo-Greek	Demetrus Apollodotus Menandar Hippostratos Lysis Harmous	?     
04.	Indo-Sythian	Azes Azesiles Spoalirises Spalagandmasa	    
05.	Indo-Parthain	Gondaphares Abadagases Zeioneses	?   
06.	Kushan	Kuzulakadphsis Vima Kadphsis Kanishka	100- 400 AD



		Huvishka	
		Vasudeva	
		Kedara	
07.	Hun	Miharkula	500 AD
08.	Rajas of Kashmir	Durlaba	600-
		Vinayaditya	1334
		Vigraha	AD
		Shankar Varma	
		Gopal Varma	
		Sugandha	
		Chakra Varma	
		Didda Kshemagupta	
		Abhimanya Gupta	
		Bhima Gupta	
		Sangrama Deva	
		Ananta Deva	
		Kalasa	
		Harsha	
		Jaya Sinha	
		Jag Deva	
09.	Sultans of Kashmir	Sikander	1334-
		Zian-ul-Abideen	1586
		Muhammad Shah	
		Fateh Shah	
		Nazuk Shah	
		Hemayun	
		Ibrahim Shah	
		Ismail Shah	
		Yousuf Shah	
		Yaqoob Shah	
10.	Mughals	Akabar	1586-
		Jahangar	1752
		Shah Jahan	



		Aurengzeb	
		Shah Alam	
		Jahander	
		Faruk Siyar	
		Muhammad Shah	
11.	Durrani	Ahmad Shah	1753-
		Suliman Shah	1819
		Timur Shah	
		Mahmood Shah	
		Zaman Shah	
		Shah Shuja	
		Qasir Shah	
		Ayoub Shah	
		Atta Muhammad	
12.	Sikhs	Ranjit Singh	1819-
			1846
13.	Dogra	Gulab Singh	1846-
		Rambir Singh	1947
		Pratap Singh	
		Hari Singh	

Besides, there are other hundreds of coins of Roman, Kabul, Delhi and other rulers of the ancient periods. Maharaja Rambir Singh experimented paper money in his empire, these currency notes and printing blocks are also housed in the gallery.

## PAINTINGS

There is no record of doing paintings in ancient Kashmir. Its history in the land hardly goes beyond Mughal period. Mughal nobles as said promoted tradition of painting in Kashmir in 16th Century AD. There are said were five painters of repute from Kashmir in Mughal darbar. Although there is no painting evidence left of any Mughal period in state museum but a remarkable set of



24 large paintings on cotton is recorded are housed in the Indian section of Victoria and Albert Museum of London which are said were produced in Kashmir in the middle of 16th Century AD.

The painting gallery of the Museum houses very few Kashmirian paintings which included few banners and portraits of 18th and 19th Century AD, besides there are several illustrated manuscript leaves which also depicted local Kashmirian painting themes. The other paintings which number about 700, are all miniatures from Kangra, Phari, Basolhi, Rajasthan and few other hilly schools of India. These miniatures are in different series which depict different mythological and love stories. The story of Lord Krishna, Durga and Sudhama is revealed by a series of Phari set of miniatures.

The story of Disappointed Nayaka is given by Kangra painters.

The gallery houses a set of five portraits of various Rajas and Maharajas, these portraits are recorded to have been collected from Jammu. The miniatures are painted in magnificent colours and respective traditional styles. The date of these paintings does not go beyond 18th Century AD.

## **GEOLOGY AND MINERAL**

The gallery initially was very poor and it housed only few items. It enriched its collection when a good collection of mineral specimens were transferred from Jammu and placed here. In Jammu the geological department from the prince of wales colleges was dropped and all the collection of the department were brought to Srinagar and housed in the gallery. The gallery houses now 1500 items. These are mostly the representative mineral specimen found in the state. It also houses few ancient fossils, but most outstanding find is the meteorite piece recorded to have fallen from space at Shopian in 1913 AD.



## **ARMORY**

The gallery houses 300 items of Kashmiri Armory. It included few tradition weapons too. These weapons are recorded to had been transferred from military stores of Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir. It contained Sikh and Dogra period guns, revolvers, swords, daggers, shields and World War II guns.

## **ARTS**

The gallery houses 4000 arte-facts of Kashmir Arts. These are hundred and two hundred years old. Most of these objects are recorded to have been transferred from state Toshkana while later on the authorities enriched the gallery by yearly art purchases. The Gallery has been taking care of paper machie, wood carving and several glorious metal works.

## **PAPIER MACHIE**

Papier machie means 'mashed paper' it is a unique combination of paper and painting. It involves colourful ornamentation of paintings on paper surface. It is also applied to the smooth surfaces of wood, carboard and leather. The art has a long history. It is widely believed to had been introduced by Sultan Zain-ul-Abiden in 15th Century AD. He is said to had invited the artists from central Asia and provided them Jagirs. Kashmiries are learnt to have learned the art from those craft masters. Initially the art was known here by the name of Kari Qalamdani, it was then confined upto small objects like pen cases and small boxes but later on it came to applied on other objects it is applied on medium and big size decorative objectes. The art mostly remained confined upto urban areas and to a particular community know as Shia Muslims.

Although the past glorious hands are gone but the art is still popular. The papier machie objects housed in the gallery are the



master objects produced in 18th and 19th Century AD in olden city of Srinagar.

## **WOODEN WORKS**

Wood work is another important classical art of Kashmir. It is believed born of the needs of the local people and inspired by the rich variety of beautiful walnut and deodar woods. it has not been only a decorative craft but functional as well. Most of the

olden houses of the land still demonstrate a variety of glorious wood works. It includes handsome carvings, lattice and Khatamband crafts. The carvings are done on well smooth surfaces of the wood. Usually tables, stools, bowls and panels are carved in various glorious designs.

The local and Chinese designs were preferred in olden works. Which included motifs of lotus, rose, iris, Kashmirians fruits and leaves of local trees. The Chinese designs depicted Lhasa dragon and cloud forms.

Wood work is widely believed got introduced here in the period of Muslim Sultanate period. Mughals not only promoted it but also added new dimensions to the craft. On the other hand there are few scholars who trace its origin to the period of Maharaja Harsha (11th Century AD). They have found mention of glorious twelve story wooden place of Harsha near, Razdani, in Rajatarangni (Medieval Chronicle of Kashmir by Kalhana).

The Wooden arte-facts exhibited in gallery are not so old they are of the late 20th Century.

## **METAL ART**

Metal art has a long history in this land. The ancient metal workers used to make impressive Hindu and Buddhist images for worship purposes. But soon in 14th century when Islamic faith flourished, the tradition of casting images became outdated, the



artists responsible for making of images learned producing of metal utensils. They made brilliant types of utensils to suit the new emerging societies. Copper tea pots (Samawar) Hand-washand Water Jugs (Tasht-Ner) Plates, Bowls, Pitchers and vessels were preferred.

Large collections of this contemporary metal art can be still seen in various copper markets of cities and towns of Kashmir. The gallery displays varieties Kashmirians metal and brass works of the contemporary ages.

## HANDICRAFTS

The gallery houses about 350 items of olden Kashmirian handicrafts. Most of these handicrafts are recorded to have been transferred from state Toshkhana. There are few which have been acquired though yearly art purchases. The collections of gallery include world class Shahpasand Kani Shawls, Jamawars, Amlikar, Rumals, Embroidery and Sozni works.

Handicrafts have a long history in this land. People from ancient periods have been making and wearing various textile crafts. The earliest evidences of wearing cloths are seen on few motifs stamped over the ancient tiles of Harwan Kashmir. On these tiles

are shown men and women wearing transparent robes. Huen-tsang the

Chinese traveler who visited this land in middle of the 7th Century AD has found Kashmirian people wearing cloths of white linen. Of all ancient crafts, Kashmiri shawl has been more famous and popular. These shawls are said were weaven here in various shades and designs.

Kashmiri Sulateen promoted it as an industry and introduced few new central Asian trends to the industry. The industry flourished in the period of Mughals. Kashmir Chronicles have recorded 40,000 shawl looms that existed in the period of Akbar. Excellent loom



shawls were prepared in the period of Durrani, Sikh and Dogra Rajas. Kashmiri shawl were in great demand in entire Europe several Kashmirian designs got cultivated in few European countries too.

Master-pieces of few Shahpasand Kani shawls prepared during Durrani Sikh and Dogra period are housed in the gallery several shawls and table covers are embroidered in very fine and delicate designs.

One such Amlikar shawl is recorded was prepared in the workshop of one famous master craftsman Ghulam Ahmad Kaloo (Ammu Kaloo) in Zaina Kadal area of Srinagar city. The shawl is embroidered in shape of map of Srinagar and depicts most of the places of the city with names written in Urdu. The Amlikar shawl is said has been prepared on the advice of Maharaja Sri Rambir Singh in (1858-85). Besides Kani shawls, there are master pieces of Jamawars, Embroidery, Chikni and Sozni works of master crafts man of the land displayed in the gallery.

The gallery houses several pieces of tapestry Rumals (Hankchiefs) and few tribble crafts, which in their respective embroideries depict various mythological scenes. Among its olden cloths are few deteriorated pieces of a muslim canopy believed belonged to the period of Sultan Zain-ul-Abiden (Budshah) 15th century AD. The cloth is said was recovered from a corner of Budshah's tomb at Zaina Kadal Srinagar. Few beautiful specimens of brocades, carpets and chin-stitch are also housed in the gallery but those are not as old and belong to 20th Century AD.

## MANUSCRIPTS

Kashmir manuscripts are housed in several institutions which includes Research Library Kashmir University, Cultural Academy and Archival repository at Srinagar. The state museum gallery houses very few manuscripts not more than two hundred. These manuscripts are the best evidences of calligraphy works of the land calligraphy



is said ranked higher than paintings, with their deft artistic fingers, Kashmiri artists are said excelled in penmanship. The art has not so long history in Kashmir.

It is said to had been introduced in the period of Sultan Zain-ul-Abiden 15th Century AD who is believed to had invited number of master calligraphits from central Asia. Several Kashmirian calligraphists were appointed in Mughal court. Mention may be made of Muhammad Hussain Kashmiri and Muhammad Murad Kashmiri, they were honoured by the respective tiles of zareen qalam (golden pen) and shirin qalam (sweet pen) by Mughal royals.

P N K Bamzai (historian) says, Kashmiri scribe used a reed-pen in writing and as a miniature painter his line acquired thereby more uniformity and regularity, the precision of a medalist rather than the fluency of the habitual brush writer. He invented an ink which could not be washed off with water and his manuscripts were in great demand.

Among its master piece manuscripts the gallery houses a miniature copy of holy Qur'an which bears the seal of king Auranzeb on its back page. It is believed to had been copied by the king himself, it carries decorative gold painted borders, a copy of Shahnama Firdusi is also preserved in the gallery. The gallery houses also two important documents of Mughal period, one relating granting of land to a widow by Shahjahan (Mughal emperor) and other the copy of decision relating the properties of Khanqah Makhdoomi (RA).

## NATURAL HISTORY

Kashmir possessed a large and varied animal kingdom it offered a great attraction to European sports men during the times of Maharajas. The state has also been maintaining a few preserves in which visitors where not allowed to shoot (few such parks are still being preserved here). But rest there was no such restriction on shootings. The whole sale slaughter and poor conservations of



wild life has considerably damaged the glorious animal kingdom of the land.

The evidences of olden varied animal kingdom can be seen in shape of stuffs in the natural history gallery of the Museum. It is very interesting for those who are interested in Kashmir Fauna. There are about 2000 stuffs of animals and birds housed in the gallery. These are said were collected by one Col. A E Wards (Fauna Expert) and incharge of the gallery assisted by one Pearl (taxidermist) in arrangement of the exhibits.

Among the animal stuffs mention may be made of Kashmiri Muskdeers, Markhoor, Barasingha, the great Tibetan Sheep, Ibex, Monkeys, Snow Leopards and Bears. The birds stuffs include various varieties of volutures, Crows, Eagles, Falcons, Hazaardastan, Haroons, King-Fishers, Golden Orioli, Chakor, Nilkanth, Wood Cockers etc. The eagle stuffs are of fishing eagle, common eagle, steep eagle, crested serpent eagle and white eyed buzzard eagle. The gallery since its establishment in museum in 1900 could never enrich its collection except few fossil finds of elephants. Which were brought to the gallery in 1913 from Sumbar-Pompur and Wofzan-Bijbehara. The fossil finds are believed thousands of year old.

The gallery is important in the sense as it has provided place to most of the stuffs of animal kingdom, the varieties of few of which the land has already lost.





**Three headed Siva 8th Century AD Pandrethan**





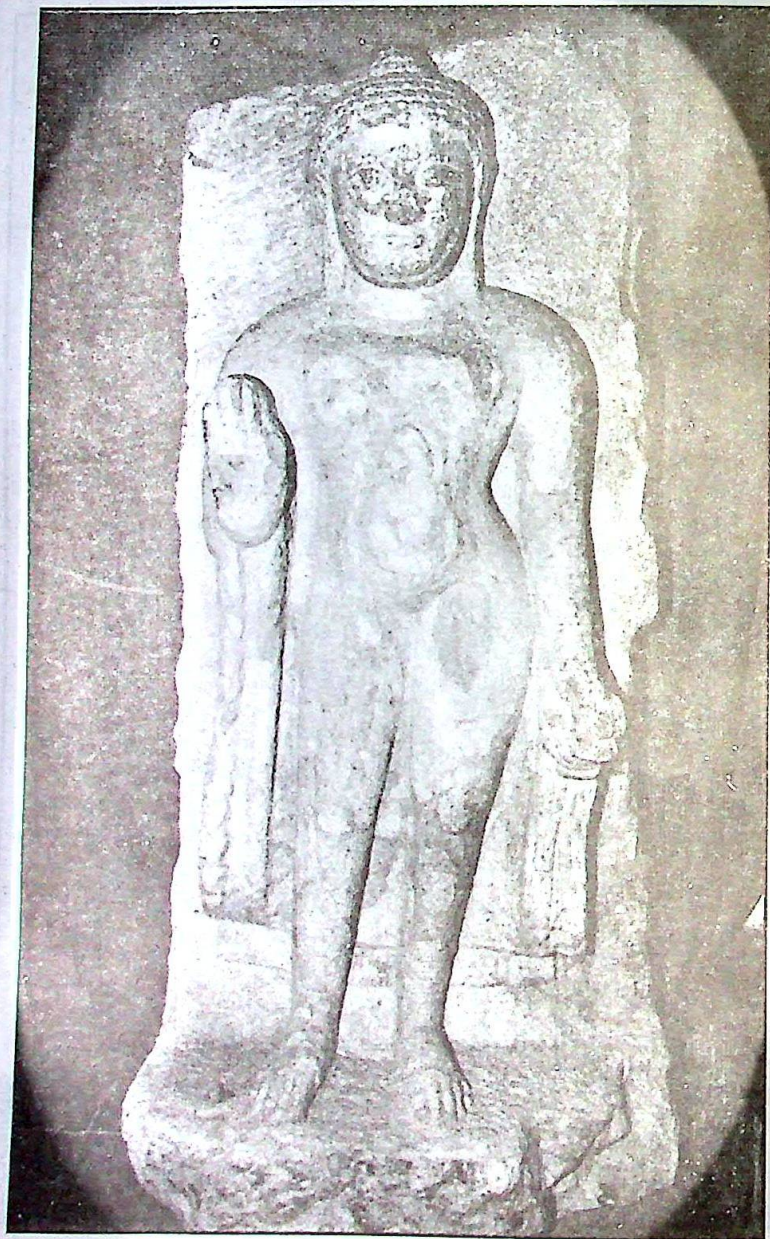
**Headless Vishnu 8th Century AD Pandrethan**





**Buddha 10th Century AD Parihaspura**





**Buddha 10th Century AD Hawal Srinagar**





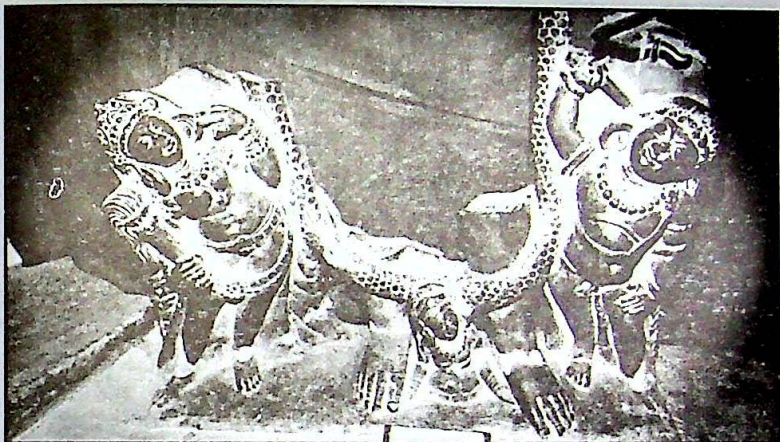
**Yaksha 10th Century AD Parihaspura**





**Vai Kuntha Vishnu 9th Century AD Avantipura**





**Gadadevi and Chakrapursha  
9th Century AD Avantipura**



**Above, Man and Woman on Panjra, below  
Hunting of stag 3rd Century AD Harwan**





**Vaikunthan Vishnu**  
**10th Century AD Devesar, Kulgam**





**Varaha 10th Century AD Devesar, Kulgam**





**Sun Goddess 10th Century AD Devesar, Kulgam.**





**Moon Goddess 10th Century AD Devesar, Kulgam.**





**Male Figure Holding Wreath in one Hand and  
Chamar in Other hand**

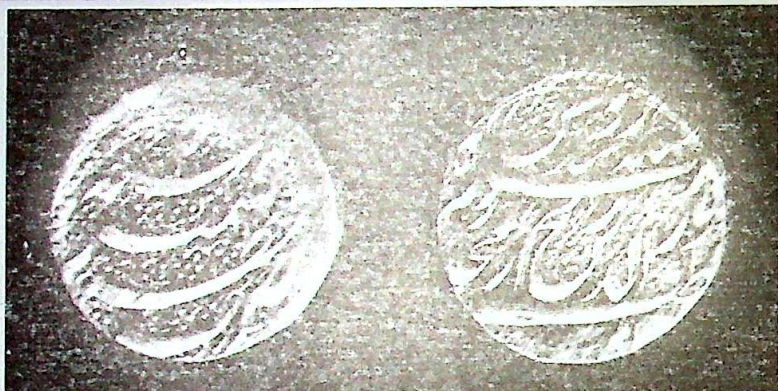




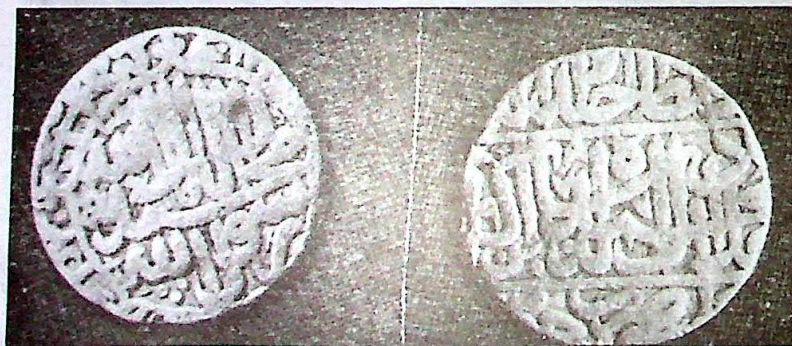
**Yoga Narayan**  
**10th Century AD Devesar, Kulgam.**

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**Silver coins struck in the name of patron saints  
of Kashmir, early 19th Century AD**

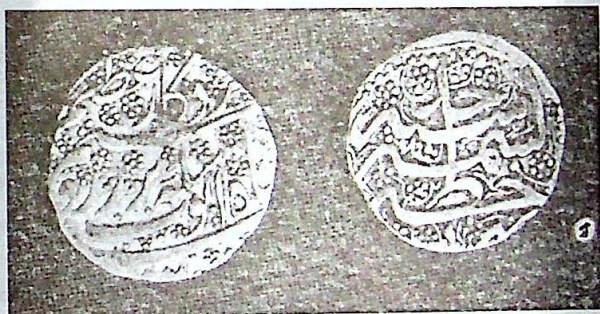


**Gold coins of Akbar Mughal Badshah  
16th Century AD**





**Silver coins of Hippostratas Indo-Greek  
Prince 1st Century BC**



**Silver coins of Ayoub Shah Durrani  
Badshah 18th Century AD**



**Silver coins of Menandar Indo-Greek  
Prince 1st Century BC**





**Samawar 19th Century AD Srinagar**

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**Enamled Work Kangri 20th Century AD**





**Water Jug Mughal Period**

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**Handwash Mughal Period**

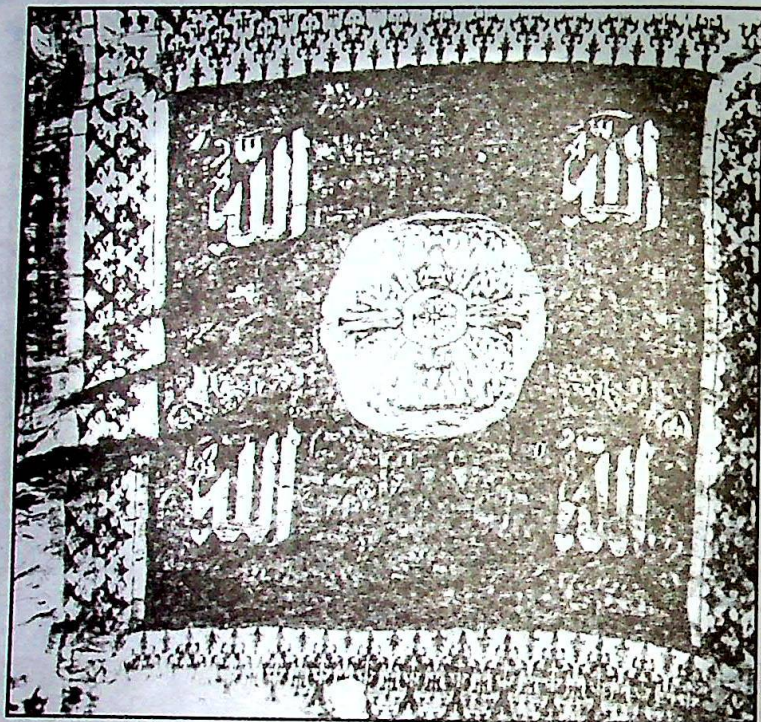
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**Papeir Machie Bowl 20th Century AD**

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**Budshah Canopy 15th Century AD**

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**Jamawar Shawl 18th Century AD**

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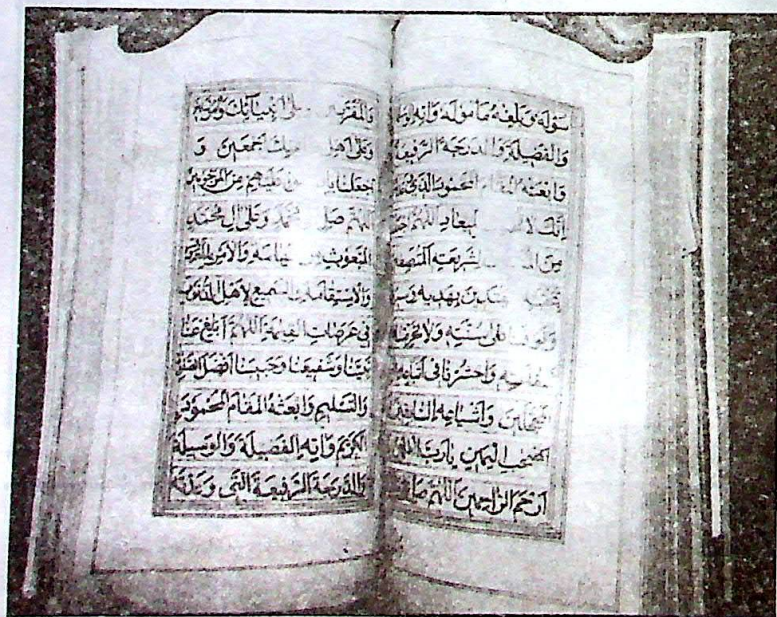


Stone Inscription Mughal Period 17th Century AD



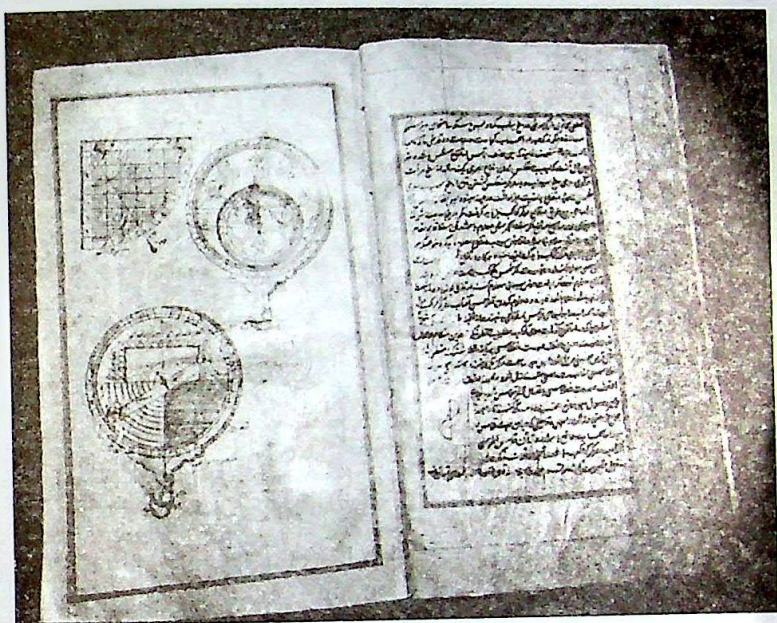


**Holy Qur'an bearing seal of Aurangzeb  
Mughal Emperor 17th Century AD**

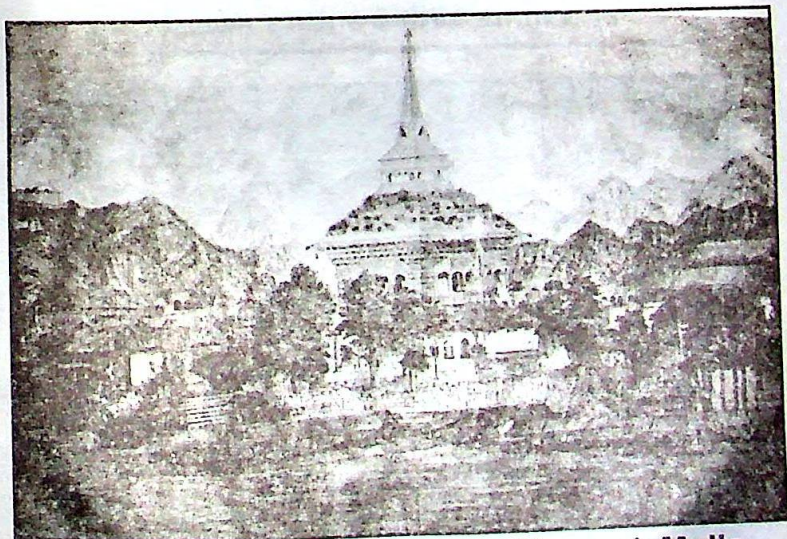


**Arabic Manuscript 19th Century AD**





**Persian Manuscript 19th Century AD**

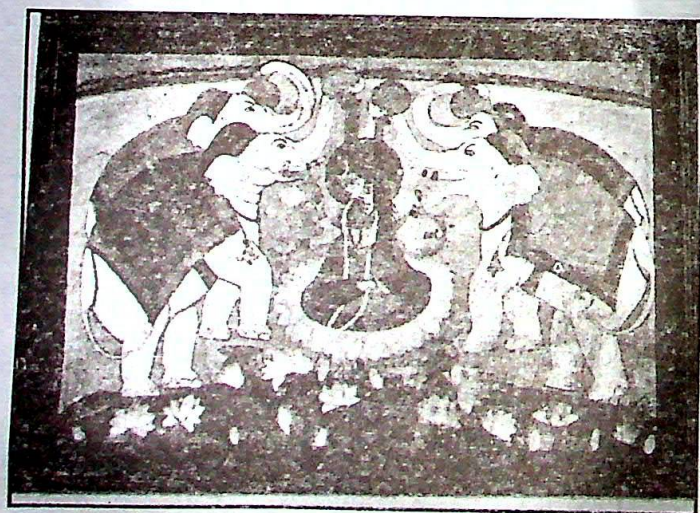


**Kashmir Painting depicting Khanqah Mulla  
Srinagar 20th Century AD**





**Nagari Manuscript with Golden  
Paints 19th Century AD**



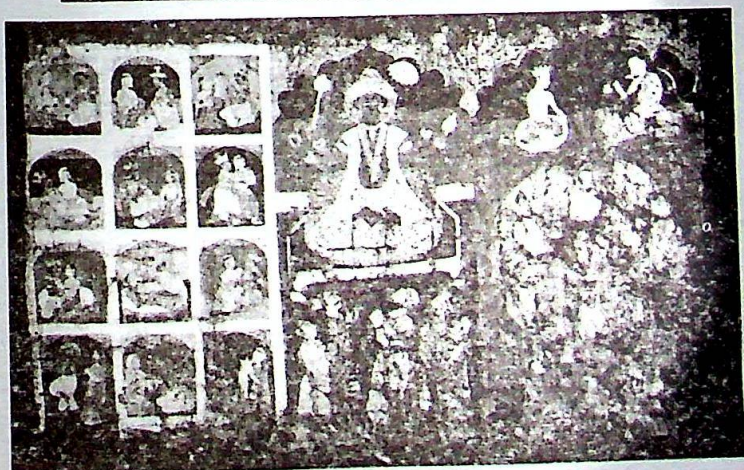
**Saraswati 19th Century AD Srinagar**





**Maharaja Rambir Singh**  
**19th Century AD**

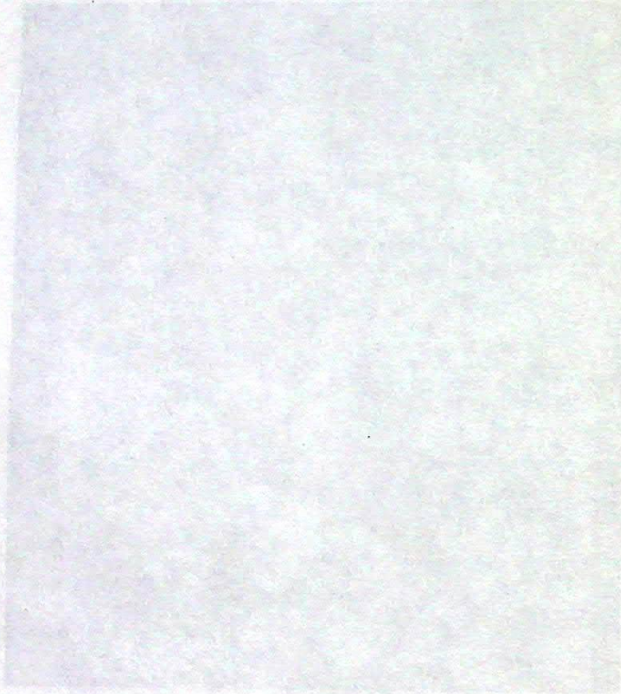
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**Kashmir Painting 19th Century AD Srinagar**

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Kashmir Research Institute  
Jammu, Jammu & Kashmir



Kashmir Research Institute  
Jammu, Jammu & Kashmir









## A WORD ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Iqbal Ahmad born in Village Parigam Check (South Kashmir) is working in State Archaeology and Museums Department, presently holding the post of Museum Guide. After graduating in Arts faculty from Kashmir University, he did his post graduate Diploma in Numismatics from IIRNS Nasik Maharashtra. He is the first numismatist of the Jammu and Kashmir State besides a well known Archaeologist and writer. He started his writing career while contributing to various local dailies and weeklies. He is a contributor to the leading daily of Kashmir valley, *Greater Kashmir*. He is working on several archaeology and numismatic projects.

The present booklet guide to State Museum is his first publication. His two other books 'Sculptures of Kashmir' and 'Sultanate Period Coins' are under publication and are expected very soon.